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To: Sushila Nanda/DC/USEPA/US, Yvette Roundtree/R3/USEPA/US,

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Subject: Fw: Letter to the Editor

Posted Date: 10/25/2012 08:50 AM

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Date: 10/24/2012 05:52 PM

Subject: Fw: Letter to the Editor

Another one.

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From: Nancy Stoner/DC/USEPA/US
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Subject: Fw: Letter to the Editor

Fyi

Nancy K. Stoner

From: "George S. Hawkins" [George.Hawkins@dcwater.com]
Sent: 10/24/2012 05:25 PM AST
To: Shawn Garvin; Bicky Cornan; Nancy Stoner
Subject: Letter to the Editor

To the group,

Below is the Letter to the Editor of the Wall Street Journal that the Chair of our Board submitted yesterday:

To the Editor,

The editorial "Obama's Storm Tax" rightly raises questions about the federal government's role in regulating urban water and wastewater systems, and the fairness of requiring urban ratepayers to fund the resulting improvements. However, you have missed the mark in several respects.

George Hawkins, the General Manager of DC Water, is quoted in support of the idea that the current regulatory structure is driving ever larger investments of public funds to achieve diminishing improvements to water quality. Mr. Hawkins noted in his testimony, for example, that it costs 350 times more today to remove the next pound of nutrients than it did 1980. Yet, DC Water is under a court-ordered consent decree to build a \$2.6 billion tunnel system -- with average monthly water and sewer bills set to rise over \$100 as a result -- at the behest of an Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Justice that reported to the previous president, not the current one.

By contrast, the EPA today is discussing with DC Water green pilot programs that could reduce the reliance on costly and invisible tunnels. Such a discussion would not have been possible under the prior administration due to technology, public interest and political will. Although it remains to be seen whether EPA's new policy on integrated permitting will offer the flexibility we need to continue improving water quality while spending our money more wisely, the flexibility that the Agency has demonstrated with cities like Philadelphia and Atlanta is very promising.

In the Clean Water Act's 40th anniversary year, it is imperative to discuss what the next generation of improvements to our waterways will look like and who should pay for them. But such a discussion must be grounded in history and in fact.

William M. Walker
Washington, DC

The writer is chairman of the board of directors of DC Water.

Feel free to share,

George



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